



# planning & building ..... news

## Building Permits Ensure Safety and Quality

In the months before the cool weather and rainy season arrive, the long sunlit days are ideal for working on home improvement projects. Before you strap on your leather tool belt and get the rust off your drill gun, don't forget your most important piece of equipment—a city building permit.

Except for a handful of projects like putting a new coat of paint on your house or installing a new garage door in the existing frame, all home remodeling projects may require review from the City. Some homeowner associations may even require approval for painting and other modifications to your property.

What is the purpose a permit? To ensure that your home remodeling project is compliant with minimum safety standards of the Uniform Building, Plumbing, Mechanical and Energy Codes. What that means is a safe and lasting home for you, your family and the entire neighborhood. Building with a proper permit raises the quality of the project and the property values. Building regulations ensure structural integrity, decrease the risk of fires and termites, prevent systems from malfunctioning, confirm that your sewer and plumbing functions,

and reduce your energy costs to heat and cool your home. The City can help you avoid costly drainage and flooding problems and can help you remove toxic substances, like lead based paint and asbestos, from your living environment.

If you build without permits, the consequences can be dangerous and costly. The fines can add up to more than the cost of remodeling. Another risk of building without a permit is being required to remove the illegal construction completely and rebuild it. If you sell your property, building without permit may create a cloud over your title and reduce the value.

The Development Services Staff is here to help you find a safe and legal way to build or to correct any pre-existing situations. *Acquiring a permit is simple.* Bring your plans to the Planning and Building Department for review. Once plans have been approved and the necessary fees paid, you will be given approval to begin your project. Inspections will be scheduled to assure safety and integrity. Paying for a permit will not only save you the risk of a potentially hazardous living environment, but will also increase your property value. For more information regarding permits or correcting illegal situations, please call the Building Division at (619)691-5272. ■

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**OUR MISSION** *is to guide the physical development of the City through the implementation of the General Plan and Building Codes. We are committed to enhancing the quality of life in our community by planning for sound infrastructure and public services, protection of the environment, and promotion of high quality social and economic growth.*

## Inspector Offers Words of Wisdom



*Jim Hitchcock*

Jim Hitchcock understands the importance of building rapport between the builder and inspector. "Be firm, fair, and friendly," if you are to be successful in your job, says Hitchcock. Jim is a prime example of an inspector who has achieved satisfaction with his customers, even when he is enforcing corrections.

Superintendents, homeowners, builders and co-workers alike feel that, when dealing with Jim, he has their best interests at heart. "When he writes a correction for the Builder, no matter how alarming the project may be, Jim never makes the individual feel inferior,

but rather stops and explains why the corrections are necessary. Only after the builder understands will he continue on with his inspection," said Shawn Ahlin, Senior Building Inspector.

Other co-workers say that Jim has a great sense of humor and usually posts a variety of mantras on the community board that range from wisdom about life, to mouth-watering recipes or his most notable saying, "Enjoy the day."

Jim is a long-time resident of Chula Vista, who seemed destined to be a Building Inspector. He started out in construction landscaping and worked as a carpenter for 15 years. He was often assigned to be the builder who would do the "walk through" with the inspector and answer any of the questions posed. Intrigued by the duties of an inspector, he quickly found a job as a Code Enforcement Officer with the City of Chula Vista. After two years he landed the position of Building Inspector and has served for almost 18 years. "The most rewarding thing about my job is knowing that I help to ensure that people are safely building houses that will last a long time and be something proud to live in," says Hitchcock. ■

## Brown Bag Presentation Open to All



Healthy Eating Active Communities  
an initiative of The California Endowment

The Planning and Building Department invites you to the latest Brown Bag Presentation. This session will focus on public health benefits

achievable through good community planning. The guest speaker, Dana Richardson, along with South Bay Partnership Team Members, will explain their

work with the Healthy Eating, Active Communities (HEAC) Initiative in Chula Vista. HEAC is an obesity prevention campaign that emphasizes improvements to healthy eating and physical activity as key to community health improvements.

The workshop will be held on Friday, September 29, from noon to 1 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room of the Chula Vista Police Station (315 Fourth Avenue). Bring your healthy brown bag lunch. Drinks will be provided. Parking is limited, so walking, biking, and carpooling are encouraged. Public parking will be at the Civic Center, the Central Library, or the downtown public parking garage.

For more information, please contact Nancy Lytle at [nlytle@ci.chula-vista.ca.us](mailto:nlytle@ci.chula-vista.ca.us) or (619) 691-5114. ■

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## Did You Know?

Building permits are required for fences over 72 inches and free-standing masonry walls over 48 inches. The planning division has information on zoning regulations applicable to all fences. For more information on fencing requirements, call Building Division at (619) 691-5272 or visit us online at [www.chulavistaca.gov/city\\_services/development\\_services/planning\\_building/development\\_services\\_center/process\\_guides/fences.asp](http://www.chulavistaca.gov/city_services/development_services/planning_building/development_services_center/process_guides/fences.asp) ■

## Garage Sale Permits

Do you have old belongings that you have been trying to get rid of? Do you want to make extra cash while doing so? Then you are probably considering having a garage sale!

But before having a garage sale, there are a few things you should know:

- A garage sale license is *free*
- A license must be obtained before any resident, group or organization conducts the sale
- A license is valid for a period of 10 consecutive days

To obtain a garage sale license, come in and apply or go online and download a copy at [http://www.chulavistaca.gov/city\\_services/development\\_services/planning\\_building/pdf/garage\\_sale\\_lic.pdf](http://www.chulavistaca.gov/city_services/development_services/planning_building/pdf/garage_sale_lic.pdf) ■



# Customer Service Improvements in Motion for 2007

In a recent survey, you rated our online services and counter assistance. Here is what you told us.

*Our online services need improvement. In addition, there should be:*

- *increased ability for private conversations with counter staff so confidentiality is protected*
- *a system that directs the customers to the right technician*
- *vending, copying and automatic teller machines nearby*
- *on-line payments and permits*

We agree! Your comments are being used to improve our web site and customer service operations. "If we are to be successful in providing first-class service, we must listen to our customers' needs and continually improve what we do and how we do it," said Jim Sandoval, Director of Planning and Building. Sandoval has made improving customer service operations one of his top priorities, and he is doing so by collaborating with staff on key customer service initiatives. ■

## Poll Results for Online Services

40% had a positive or fair experience  
40% had a negative experience  
20% were unsure about their experience  
60% felt our web site was not easy to use and had trouble with links

## Public Suggestions:

- Have zoning information accessible online
- Make fee payments online
- Current projects and developments under evaluation posted ■

## We Want Your Opinion!

Our Staff is committed to providing you with the best service possible. As always, we value your input and any questions or concerns you may have. E-mail us at : [http://www.chulavistaca.gov/City\\_Services/Development\\_Services/Planning\\_Building/contact.asp](http://www.chulavistaca.gov/City_Services/Development_Services/Planning_Building/contact.asp), or call us at (619) 691-5114. ■

## Planning and Building on the Web

We are constantly working to improve our service via the Internet. When was the last time you visited us online?

[www.chulavista.ca.gov/sc/pb](http://www.chulavista.ca.gov/sc/pb)



### *Message from the Director*

*James D. Sandoval, AICP*

*Director of Planning and Building*

## Community Involvement is the Key to Our Success

To be successful community partners, your Planning and Building Department must excel in three areas: quality development, environmental protection, and community involvement. In the next three "Planning and Building News" issues, I'll share how we strive for success in all areas, starting with community involvement.

In order to create positive outcomes for our community, development must adhere to the policies of the City's General Plan, the development standards and codes. Citizens most affected are able

to voice concerns through the City's formal processes. We often go beyond the minimum requirements and hold non-mandatory "neighborhood meetings" when development is likely to interest or impact residents. We conduct our neighborhood outreach in the following manner.

- The proposed project is fully explained to attendees by the project proponent.
- A discussion occurs among all in attendance.
- Staff notes all concerns that were raised and reads them back at the conclusion

of the meeting; staff agrees to provide a response to the concerns.

- After the initial meeting, staff works with the developer to address the concerns raised by making project changes and refinements or determine that modifications are unwarranted.
- Staff communicates back to the concerned parties as to how their issues were addressed or, if not, explains why.

We have found this process, as an adjunct to the formal hearing process, gives project proponents an opportunity to respond respectfully to community concerns. It allows community members to raise issues that are important to them. By listening, recording and getting back to the community, we hope to create an atmosphere of respect, accountability and trust that is vitally important. In this atmosphere, every change can be a positive change for Chula Vista. 🏠

### **E V E N T S** *For time and location of these meetings, please call 619-691-5101.*

<i>September 7</i>	Redevelopment Advisory Committee Meeting	<i>October 4</i>	Public Participation in Chula Vista: Methods to Encourage an Engaged Community Workshop
<i>September 13</i>	Planning Commission Hearing	<i>October 5</i>	Chula Vista Redevelopment Corporation Meeting
<i>September 14</i>	Chula Vista Redevelopment Corporation Meeting	<i>October 11</i>	Planning Commission Hearing
<i>September 18</i>	Design Review Committee and Corporation Meeting	<i>October 12</i>	Chula Vista Redevelopment Corporation Meeting
<i>September 25</i>	Design Review Committee and Corporation Meeting	<i>October 16</i>	Design Review Committee and Resource Conservation Commission Hearings
<i>September 27</i>	Planning Commission Hearing	<i>October 25</i>	Planning Commission Hearing
<i>September 28</i>	Chula Vista Redevelopment Corporation Meeting	<i>October 26</i>	Chula Vista Redevelopment and Resource Conservation Commission Hearings
<i>September 29</i>	Brown Bag Presentation	<i>October 27</i>	Otay Ranch Towne Center Opening
<i>October 2</i>	Design Review Committee Hearing		

### **C O N T A C T**



**Administration** (619) 691-5101

#### **Building**

Main Office (619) 691-5272  
 Eastern Office (619) 409-5868  
 Permit Information (619) 691-5007  
 Code Enforcement (619) 691-5280  
 Business Licenses (619) 691-5272  
 Inspections (619) 409-5434

#### **Planning**

Zoning Information (619) 585-5621

[www.chulavistaca.gov/sc/pb](http://www.chulavistaca.gov/sc/pb)